

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

JULY 2003



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Estimates Reflect Weak Summer Job Growth

The difficulties that job seekers are having in locating a summer job were apparent in the labor force numbers released for June by the Department of Workforce Development. The total number of employed in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area did not change from May. Out of total, seasonally adjusted, labor force in the metro area of 86,400 in June, roughly 81,900 were employed.

There were also no changes in the seasonally adjusted estimate for the number of unemployed in the metro area and the unemployment rate remained at 5.2 percent in June, the same as in May. An unemployment that did not change in June is really good news when you consider that the state unemployment rate increased two-tenths of a percentage point from 5.4 to 5.6 percent and the national rate rose three-tenths from 6.1 to 6.4 percent. The Eau Claire-Chippewa unemployment rate has been less than both state and national rates for twelve months.

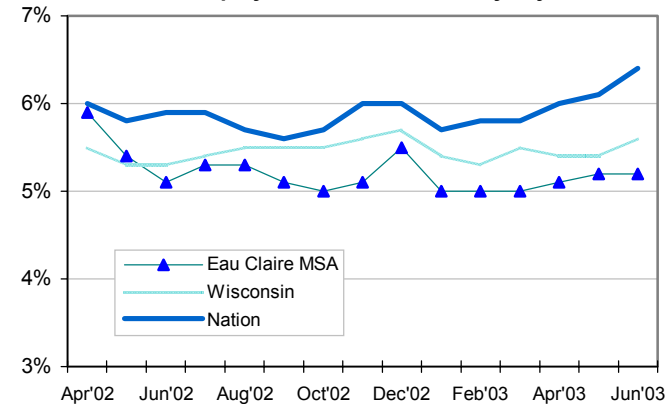
The typical seasonal changes in unemployment were present in the unadjusted estimates, however. Typically, unemployment increases from May to June when school workers who are not under 12-month

contracts are laid off for the summer months. Also adding to the number of unemployed were the new job seekers who entered the labor market hoping and looking for a summer job. Not seasonally adjusted, the number of unemployed increased by 600 residents in June and the unemployment rate rose from 4.6 to 5.3 percent for the two-county area.

And that's the scenario that played in the rural counties of the West Central region. The unemployment rate rose from May to June in each of the seven rural counties as it did in 65 counties in the state. The second highest rate increase in the state, however, occurred in Polk County. The unemployment rate there rose from 5.8 percent in May to 9.1 percent in June and ranked the third greatest increase in the state.

Three other West Central counties, out of 15 in the state, had unemployment rates that rose over one percentage point during the month. In St. Croix County the rate rose from 6.3 to 7.3 percent, in Pierce it increased from 4.2 to 5.3 percent, and in Pepin County it rose from 3.4 to 5.0 percent. In spite of the increase in Pepin County the rate there remains one of the lowest in the region.

Unemployment Rates-Seasonally adjusted



	Apr'02	May'02	Jun'02	Apr'03	May'03	Jun'03
Eau Claire MSA	5.9%	5.4%	5.1%	5.1%	5.2%	5.2%
Wisconsin	5.5%	5.3%	5.3%	5.4%	5.4%	5.6%
Nation	6.0%	5.8%	5.9%	6.0%	6.1%	6.4%

Civilian Labor Force Estimates, not seasonally adjusted, for West Central Wisconsin counties

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02
Civilian labor force	25,756	25,174	24,862	32,003	31,781	31,380	16,450	16,115	15,735	23,366	23,673	22,392	55,273	54,788	54,156
Employed	24,287	23,955	23,524	30,110	30,085	29,548	15,376	15,134	14,781	22,268	22,747	21,453	52,527	52,484	51,547
Unemployed	1,469	1,219	1,338	1,893	1,696	1,832	1,074	981	954	1,098	926	939	2,746	2,304	2,609
% unemployed	5.7	4.8	5.4	5.9	5.3	5.8	6.5	6.1	6.1	4.7	3.9	4.2	5.0	4.2	4.8
	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02
Civilian labor force	3,660	3,485	3,361	21,769	21,129	21,540	25,440	23,859	24,041	38,570	37,481	37,867	242,287	237,485	235,334
Employed	3,477	3,366	3,150	20,621	20,249	20,447	23,130	22,480	22,602	35,745	35,101	35,445	227,541	225,601	222,497
Unemployed	183	119	211	1,148	880	1,093	2,310	1,379	1,439	2,825	2,380	2,422	14,746	11,884	12,837
% unemployed	5.0	3.4	6.3	5.3	4.2	5.1	9.1	5.8	6.0	7.3	6.3	6.4	6.1	5.0	5.5

* not seasonally adjusted

Industry Employment Estimate for West Central Wisconsin: Current month - June 2003

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02
Total Nonfarm	22.5	22.4	22.2	10.2	10.1	10.0	15.9	16.5	15.6	2.5	2.5	2.3
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manufacturing	6.4	6.3	6.5	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Trade	3.6	3.6	3.7	1.6	1.5	1.5	2.6	2.5	2.4	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.6	1.7	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	2.0	1.9	2.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.3
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.7	1.6	1.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.3	1.4	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.9	4.9	4.5	2.2	2.2	2.1	4.2	4.7	4.2	0.6	0.6	0.5
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02	Jun '03	May '03	Jun '02
Total Nonfarm	10.8	10.7	10.5	15.5	15.2	15.4	28.1	27.7	27.5	76.9	77.9	76.7
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.8	1.7	1.7	3.1	3.0	3.5
Manufacturing	0.8	0.8	0.9	3.7	3.7	3.9	5.7	5.7	6.1	10.8	10.9	11.5
Trade	1.1	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	4.4	4.4	4.3	12.6	12.8	12.7
Transportation & Utilities	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.9	2.9	2.8
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.8	3.8	3.7
Education & Health Services	1.1	1.1	1.1	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	12.4	12.4	12.0
Leisure & Hospitality	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.4	3.8	3.6	3.4	7.7	7.6	7.6
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.5	3.7	3.5	3.7	8.0	7.9	7.9
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.8	3.7	3.7
Total Government	3.8	3.7	3.4	2.9	2.9	2.7	3.8	3.9	3.6	11.8	12.9	11.3

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2002 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

The lowest rate in West Central Wisconsin, and 60th in the state, was in Dunn County but even there the rate increased from 3.9 to 4.7 percent in June. All counties in the region, except Pepin, had unemployment rates that were higher than one year ago, including one the largest increases in the state in Polk County. The 9.1 percent unemployment rate in Polk County is the highest June rate since 1983.

The current nonfarm wage and salary estimates do not adequately reflect the loss of jobs that has occurred in Polk County so far in 2003, but the increase in the number of unemployed to over 2,300 certainly does account for the residents that have filed claims for unemployment compensation.

The number of new claims for unemployment benefits increased substantially in mid-June. Some of those claims reflected seasonal layoffs in manufacturing but many were from workers who were permanently displaced from several area manufacturers.

Throughout the combined West Central Wisconsin region claims for unemployment compensation benefits are fewer than one year ago. In mid-June roughly 5,200 residents filed a claim for unemployment benefits compared with 5,720 one year earlier. By mid-July

that number increases to over 6,200 which is still fewer than the count in mid-July 2002.

The total number of jobs in the region is down over the month but higher than one year ago. In June, there were 182,500 nonfarm wage and salary jobs in the nine-county area, 400 fewer than in May. Only a few industry groups reported reductions during the month. The largest loss, already mentioned, occurred in government as education facilities laid off workers for the month. The greatest reductions were in the counties with state university systems.

There were also reductions in trade and transportation. The transportation decline also reflects the summer recess in education as bus drivers are no longer needed. The decline in trade jobs follows the reduction in staff at garden centers and the loss of student workers in retail establishments. Students returning to the area will fill some of these jobs.

The nonfarm employment estimates compared with one year ago, however, show an increase in government employment. In light of budget reductions faced by most local and state agencies and institutions this is highly unlikely. Most of the total increase in jobs depends on this inflated estimate.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

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